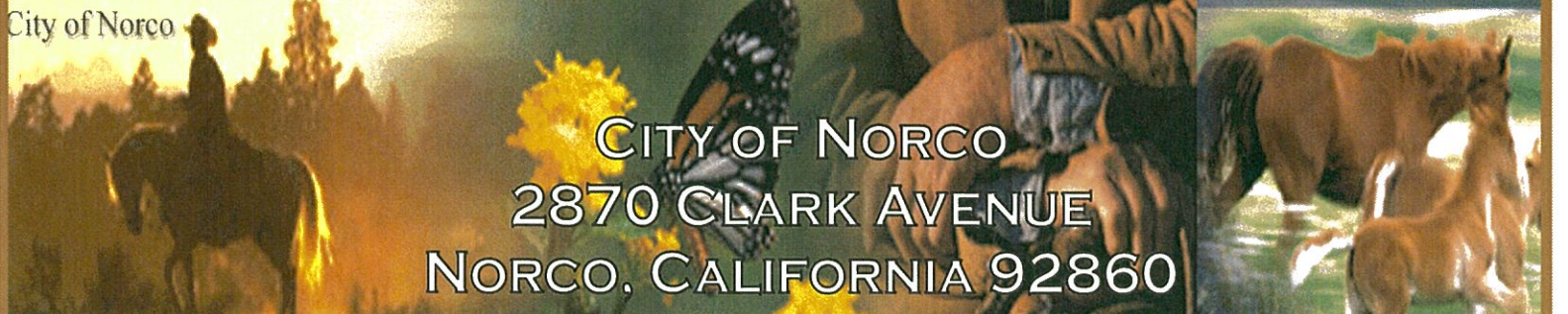



PLANNING DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2007

City of Norco



CITY OF NORCO
2870 CLARK AVENUE
NORCO, CALIFORNIA 92860



NORCO'S MOTTO,
"CITY LIVING IN A RURAL ATMOSPHERE,"
IS REFLECTED IN THIS TOWN WHERE HORSES
TROT DOWN THE STREET NEXT TO CARS.

CITY COUNCIL

HARVEY SULLIVAN, MAYOR
KATHY AZEVEDO, MAYOR PRO TEM
HAL CLARK, COUNCIL MEMBER
FRANK HALL, COUNCIL MEMBER
HARVEY SULLIVAN, COUNCIL MEMBER

PLANNING COMMISSION

GREG NEWTON, CHAIR
ROBERT WRIGHT, VICE CHAIR
MIKE HARRIS, COMMISSIONER
PAT HEDGES, COMMISSIONER
JIM MERCER, COMMISSIONER

HOUSING POLICY
DEVELOPMENT, HCD

NOV 26 2008



PLANNING DEPARTMENT

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

JAMES E. DANIELS



SENIOR PLANNER
STEVE KING



ASSOCIATE PLANNER
ALMA ROBLES



*PLANNING EXECUTIVE
SECRETARY*
SUSIE DVORAK



PLANNING INTERN
BETHMARIE LASCANO

STAFF

IN 2007, THE PLANNING DIVISION HAD A TOTAL OF THREE STAFF PERSONS, HEADED BY THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR. STAFF INCLUDES TWO PLANNERS (ONE SENIOR PLANNER, ONE ASSOCIATE PLANNER), A PLANNING INTERN, AND AN EXECUTIVE SECRETARY.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. PLANNING DIVISION ACTIVITIES	<u>PAGE</u>
CURRENT PLANNING.....	5
ADVANCED PLANNING.....	6
II. PLANNING PROJECTS: 2007	
GENERAL PLAN UPDATE.....	7
ADMINISTRATIVE CASES.....	8
PLANNING CASES.....	9
ZONE CODE AMENDMENTS.....	10
ZONE CHANGES, GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENTS, ANNEXATIONS.....	10
STAFF DEVELOPMENT.....	11
NORCO DEVELOPMENTS.....	11
III. BUILDING PERMIT ACTIVITY	
CALENDAR YEAR BUILDING PERMIT ACTIVITY.....	15
IV. COMMUNITY TRENDS & GROWTH	
COMMERCIAL/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GROWTH).....	16
RURAL ATMOSPHERE (ZONING LAYOUT OF LAND).....	18
V. POPULATION	
CENSUS DATA/DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE.....	20
OTHER CENSUS DATA.....	22
VI. WORK PROGRAM	
WORK PROGRAM FOR 2008	23

PLANNING DIVISION ACTIVITIES



The City of Norco Planning Division's Annual Report outlines the activities of the Division from January 2007 through December 2007.

The Planning Division handles current and advanced planning. The Planning Division deals with technical and aesthetic issues as they relate to land use, environmental concerns, and zoning. All planning projects and cases are reviewed and approved in compliance with the City's Zoning Code and the General Plan.

CURRENT PLANNING

Activities of current planning involve a great deal of interaction with the general public. The Current Planning Division provides timely, efficient service to the development community and is also responsible for ensuring that development in the City meets or exceeds the expectations of the community. Besides responding to public information requests and zoning-related questions, staff also reviews preliminary site plans for large commercial and industrial developments and residential modifications. Staff also assists residents and business owners about the development process by explaining development code requirements on a daily basis.

Duties include:

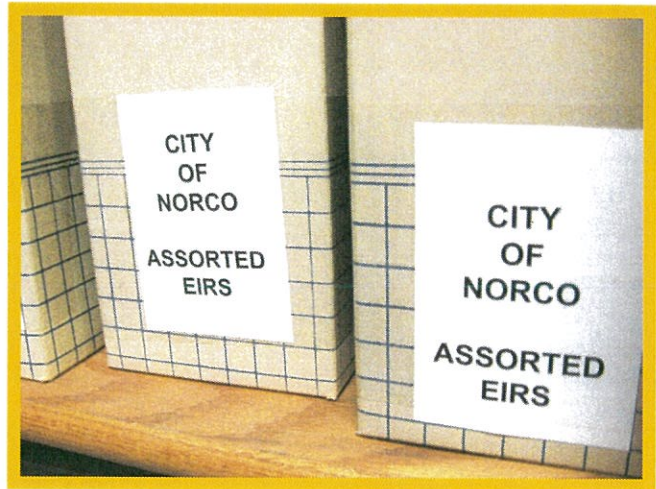
- Administrating the City's Zoning Ordinances, regulations, policies, and codes;
- Processing Planning applications and preparing reports for review by the Streets and Trails Commission, Parks and Recreation Commission, Planning Commission, and City Council;
- Environmental review of projects;
- Plan checking of ministerial building applications such as patio covers, fences, swimming pools, etc. as they relate to zoning and land use for compliance with the standards of the City's Ordinances;
- Plan checking of new commercial development for compliance with zoning regulation and entitlement approvals;
- Responding to numerous telephone calls and inquiries in writing, at the public counter, and via email regarding zoning and land use issues;
- Business license review for new and existing businesses in the City; and
- Managing all aspects of commercial vehicle parking exemption permits: issuance, tracking, renewal, and termination.



PLANNING DIVISION ACTIVITIES

ADVANCED PLANNING

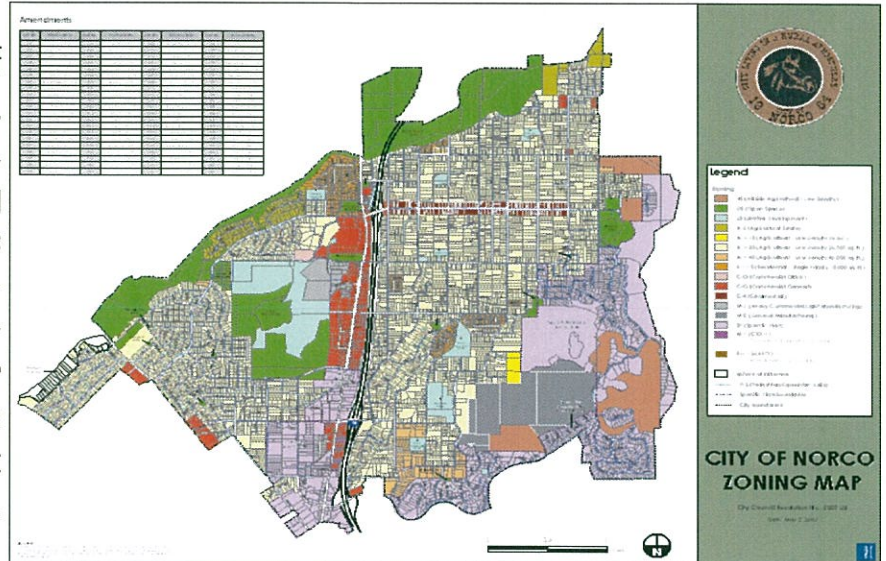
Advanced Planning is tasked with future planning for the city of Norco. The activities of advance planning include: research, data analysis, and report writing of federal, state, and local mandated documents (i.e. general plan updates) required of city government for legislative review and compliance. These types of documents generally require a great deal of staff time and many hours of preparation before a final product is ready. In addition, some documents are required to be reviewed and updated on an annual basis.



Other documents are prepared in an effort to seek funding from various federal, state, and/or local agencies for an array of land use projects. Additionally, updates and amendments to the Norco's Zoning Code, Municipal Code, and Norco's California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines are prepared. Other reports are prepared under separate cover to reflect new and/or required legislation, and lastly, projects processed/prepared under advance planning also require environmental review.

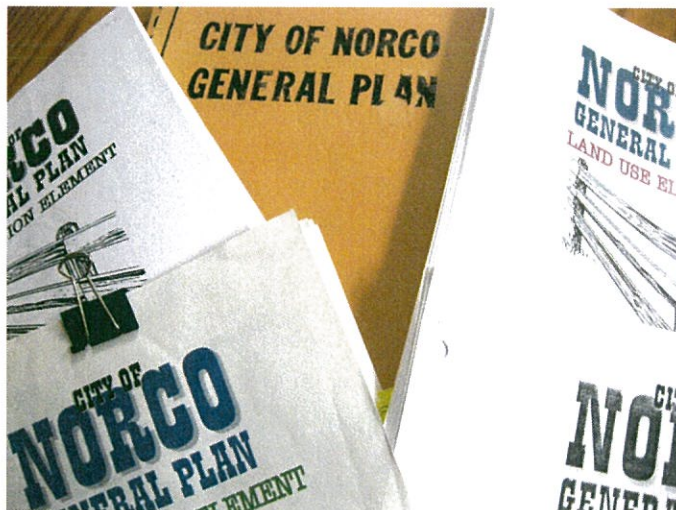
In some cases Advanced Planning requires community input and interaction. The Planning Department is responsible for organizing and handling community involvement.

The City of Norco updates elements of its General Plan on a continuing basis. In 2007, staff worked with Hogle Ireland, a land planning & development consulting firm, to update and complete the City's General Land Use and Zoning Maps into digital format which was created in a Geographic Information System that allows for easy viewing and locational analysis. This map is also available on-line at www.norco.ca.gov.



Staff also worked on mandatory elements of the required document that will be completed in the future. The following is a list of the elements that are included in the City's General Plan and their most recent and expected completion year:

- Circulation (completed – 2000)
- Housing (completed – 2000, will be updated in 2008)
- Land Use (completed – 2001)
- Conservation (completed – 2002)
- Noise (completed – 2003)
- Safety Element (update expected to be completed in the future)
- Open Space/Parks and Recreation (completed – 1989)



PLANNING PROJECTS: 2007

ADMINISTRATIVE CASES



The following table indicates the number of applications reviewed in-house administratively. Generally, administrative cases are not reviewed by the Planning Commission or City Council unless appealed, or under special circumstances.

As can be seen in Table 1 below, the processing of administrative cases plays a major role in the daily activities of the Planning Division. From the administrative cases reported, building permit reviews continue to be at the top of administrative cases reviewed by the Department. Building permits for new commercial development (after review and approval by the Planning Commission or City Council), new homes, room additions, residential pools, accessory structures, fencing, etc., are reviewed for zoning compliance, and consistency with Planning Commission conditions of approval, if applicable.

Table 1
Administrative Cases

CASES	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Special Event Permits	65	67	78	100	45	54	68
Special Sign Permits	3	0	1	4	0	9	1
Building Permit Reviews	1730	1512	2115	2793	2034	1251	1199
Certificate of Occupancy Reviews	182	73	81	82	211	13	40
Sign Reviews	20	37	35	25	35	40	43
Business License Reviews	N/A	N/A	166	417	321	361	231
Commercial Vehicle Parking Permits	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	49	46
Large Family Day Care	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1	0	2
TOTAL	1997	1689	2475	3417	2646	1777	1630



PLANNING PROJECTS: 2007

PLANNING CASES



The Planning Division processed a total of 27 Planning Commission cases for 2007, which was 44 less than 2006. Items that went to the Planning Commission included variances, conditional use permits, general plan amendments, tentative tract and parcel maps, site plan reviews, zone changes, and zone code amendments.



Table 2
Planning Commission Cases

CASES	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Variances	20	17	8	6	12	6	3
Conditional Use Permits:							
New Applications	18	18	20	15	13	21	8
Modifications	0	2	2	1	0	0	4
General Plan Amendments	2	4	4	2	1	3	0
Tentative Parcel Maps	3	6	5	5	5	6	0
Special Use Permit	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Site Plan Reviews:							
New Applications	8	11	20	18	9	11	5
Modifications	1	1	2	1	0	0	1
Specific Plans	1	0	3	0	2	0	0
Tentative Tract Maps	2	1	6	0	1	1	2
Zone Changes	2	4	3	2	2	10	1
Zone Code Amendments	5	5	4	5	5	12	3
Annexations	0	1	0	0	1	1	0
TOTAL	66	70	78	59	51	71	27

PLANNING PROJECTS: 2007

ZONE CODE AMENDMENTS

There were three Zone Code Amendments initiated by the City and processed in 2007, compared to twelve in 2006. Zone Code Amendments are typically processed to reflect new legislation and to establish and/or update provisions and requirements for certain land uses and development standards. Below are brief descriptions of each processed for 2007:

- Zone Code Amendment 2007-01 (City of Norco): was processed to amend the Norco Zoning Code by revising Chapter 18.37 (Signs) to eliminate pole signs and canister-type signs and to require individually illuminated channel letters. **(Status: Withdrawn)**
- Zone Code Amendment 2007-02 (City of Norco): was processed to amend the Norco Zoning Code by revising Chapter M-1 (Heavy Commercial/Light Manufacturing) Zone to allow tattoo and body-piercing establishments. **(Status: Approved)**
- Zone Code Amendment 2007-03 (City of Norco): was processed to establish an urgency ordinance to provide regulations for Rooming and Boarding Houses (including Parolee-Probationer Homes and Sober Living Homes) **(Status: Approved)**

GENERAL PLAN AMENDMENTS, ZONE CHANGES, & ANNEXATIONS

There was one zone change, zero general plan amendments, and zero annexations in 2007, compared to ten zone changes, three general plan amendment, and one annexation in 2006. Below are brief descriptions of the projects processed in 2007:

- Zone Change 2007-01 (City of Norco): was processed to change the zoning designation from LD (Limited Development) to A-1-20 (Agricultural Low Density) for property located on the west side of Valley View Avenue, directly north of the intersection with First Street. **(Status: Approved)**
- There were no general plan amendments processed in 2007.
- No annexations were processed in 2007.

PLANNING PROJECTS: 2007

STAFF DEVELOPMENTS

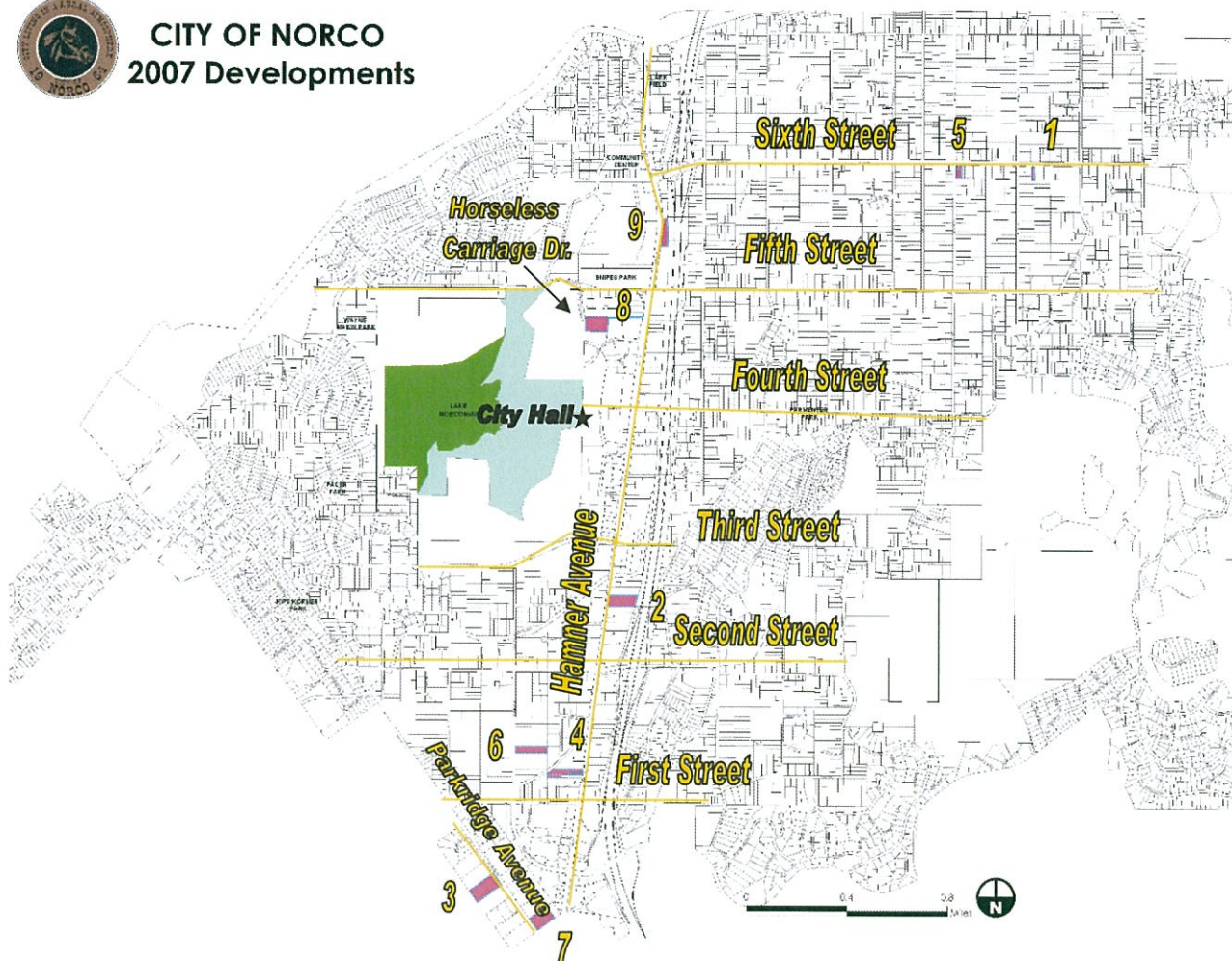
During 2007, Staff was able to attend two conferences, workshops, or other staff development opportunities.

NORCO DEVELOPMENTS

There were a number of plans reviewed for new development in 2007 in the City of Norco. The following are some of the many projects that were either approved, completed, or under construction in 2007. Commercial development has been mostly along Hamner Avenue, the City's main commercial strip but is also seen in the areas zoned for industrial (M-I zone), and neighborhood commercial (i.e., Sixth Street). Below is a vicinity map with brief descriptions of some of the City's development projects for 2007 on the following pages.



CITY OF NORCO 2007 Developments



1.



- Office Building**

This project at 454 Sixth Street consists of 1,125 square feet and serves as the office for an existing storage yard on sixth street. The western architecture of the building compliments surrounding architecture on Sixth Street. The project was "finaled" in 2007.

2.



- Automotive Repair Facility**

This project consists of an expansion of an existing vehicle sales facility located at 2185/2195 Hamner Avenue. The expansion is a single-story automotive repair building of 17,940 square feet and was "finaled" in 2007.

3.



- Ten Light Industrial Buildings**

This development was approved in March 2005 to allow the development of a industrial business park at 740 Parkridge Avenue located between Cota Street and Three Bar Lane and within the industrial portion of the Gateway Specific Plan. The business park consisted of 10 buildings to accommodate light industrial uses that range from 7,932 to 8,273 square feet each. This project was "finaled" in 2007.

4.



- Hampton Inn**

This project was approved in December 2006 to allow development of a three-story 82-unit hotel at 1530 Hamner Avenue located within the Commercial District of the Gateway Specific Plan. The hotel has typical features such as a breakfast area (no kitchen facilities), a small exercise room, meeting rooms and areas dedicated to the hotel operation (laundry, storage rooms, etc.). Construction for this project began in 2007.

Projects approved in 2007:

- 5. Federal Credit Union (Site Plan 2007-02)**
This project was approved in June 2007 allowing the development of a 5,300 square-foot building for use as a federal credit union at 3861 Hillside Avenue within the C-4 Commercial Zone.
- 6. Office and Repair Building in Conjunction with 2.0 Acres of Storage (Site Plan 2007-03)**
This project was approved in April 2007 allowing an office and repair building in conjunction with 2.0 acres of outdoor storage located at 1595 Mountain Avenue. The office building consisted of 6,400 square feet.
- 7. Office/Warehouse Buildings (Site Plan 2007-04)**
This project was approved in July 2007 allowing the development of two one-story office buildings and one one-story office/warehouse buildings on 3.36 acres located at 517 Parkridge Avenue located within the commercial district of the Gateway Specific Plan.
- 8. Multi-Tenant Industrial/Commercial Building (Site Plan 2007-05)**
This project was approved in December 2007 allowing a multi-tenant industrial/commercial building on a 3.45-acre parcel at 3299 Horseless Carriage Drive, located in the M-1 zone.
- 9. Bob's Big Boy Restaurant (Site Plan 2006-10)**
This project was approved in November 2007 allowing the development of a 5,200 square foot restaurant, Bob's Big Boy, on property located on the east side of Hamner Avenue between Fifth and Sixth Street in the C-6 zone.



BUILDING PERMIT ACTIVITY

CALENDAR YEAR 2007 ACTIVITY

The following table indicates the number and value of building permits issued for new construction (not including additions or remodels) for fiscal years 2000 thru 2003, and calendar years 2004 through 2007. In previous years, the Building Department has tracked activity based on fiscal years. However, beginning in 2004 the Department started using the calendar year format to keep track of the building activity.

Table 3
Building Permits

Year	Residential		Commercial/ Industrial Permits		Total Permits	
	Permits					
	Amount	Value	Amount	Value	Amount	Value
00-01	196	\$56,794,586	11	\$10,188,981	207	\$66,983,567
01-02	42	\$13,587,510	13	\$6,103,854	55	\$19,691,365
02-03	135	\$39,654,093	38	\$21,711,595	173	\$61,365,688
03-04	448	\$146,951,424	35	\$18,652,380	483	\$165,603,804
2004	375	\$117,718,415	35	\$16,853,806	410	\$134,572,221
2005	100	\$32,425,682	6	\$6,323,405	106	\$38,749,087
2006	4	\$699,074	29	\$22,303,955	33	\$22,903,029
2007	3	\$769,429.20	8	\$6,462,741	11	\$7,232,170.20



COMMUNITY TRENDS & GROWTH

COMMERCIAL/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (GROWTH)

The City of Norco has neighborhood, general, and heavy commercial/light industrial development throughout the City. However, the majority of commercial land is located on Hamner Avenue and Sixth Street.

Hamner Avenue


Hamner Avenue is the main commercial strip in the City. The Gateway Town Center, located on the east side of Hamner Avenue between First Street and Mountain Avenue and the Norco Auto Mall, also located on both sides of Hamner Avenue between Second and Third Street, are two of the examples of commercial development along Hamner Avenue.

Hamner Avenue has experienced major infrastructure and right-of-way improvements and new development has surfaced along this commercial corridor within the last six years. For 2007, many new businesses were either approved for or relocated to Norco along Hamner Avenue. As with any other city, new businesses in the area are important as they provide services to the community and additional tax base.

In an effort to have orderly development along Hamner Avenue for the remaining vacant lots as well as the entire commercial strip, staff began working on the Hamner Avenue Corridor Study in 2005. The City recognized the need for a strong financial tax base to ensure and maintain its current lifestyle. The Hamner Avenue Corridor Study was proposed to attract the uses the community needs and wants for this strong tax base, the Hamner Avenue Corridor Study was proposed. The Study analyzed the physical, economic and demographic character of the commercial area adjacent to Hamner Avenue, examined development opportunities and constraints, and then established recommendations to improve economic development opportunities.

The Study concluded the City of Norco needs to: create a better environment for economic development; create appropriate standards for desired and needed commercial development; ensure through zoning that development is unified, functional and compatible, thus making the community more marketable for development by developing zoning to enhance and attract desired commercial land uses while eliminating incompatible uses. In order to capture the commercial development and maximize fiscal potential, a three-step or three-phase implementation plan was recommended in the Study.

COMMUNITY TRENDS & GROWTH

 In September 2005, the City Council accepted the recommendations of the Hamner Avenue Corridor Study. The City of Norco initiated Phase One of the Hamner Avenue Corridor Study in November 2005 and completed it in March of 2006. Phase One included revising the zoning along the Hamner Avenue corridor to change the zoning designation on all properties in the City of Norco currently zoned C-1 (Light Commercial), C-2 (General Commercial) and C-3 (Heavy Commercial) to one new zoning classification termed C-G (Commercial General). The new C-G zoning classification was created to allow retail and commercial uses that center around retail, restaurants, and entertainment to serve the needs of both the local community and freeway travelers. Since 2006 new development proposals and any new business have had to comply with the requirement of the C-G zone.

Sixth Street

The commercial corridor along Sixth Street extends from the east side of the I-15 Freeway down to California Avenue. This commercial corridor has undergone several changes throughout the years in an effort to facilitate new development, and to assist the City in maintaining the “Old Town” western-style neighborhood commercial character of Sixth Street.

Residential

The majority of residential development has taken place towards the eastern portion of Norco. In 2000, a specific plan was approved for residential development along the eastern hillside boundary of Norco. The “Norco Ridge Ranch Specific Plan” consists of Tract Maps 29588 and 29589, approved for the development of 588 single-family homes on approximately 978 acres. The Norco Ridge Ranch was approved in 2000, grading began in 2001, and approval of all model home complexes within the Specific Plan was completed in 2003. Residential construction continued throughout 2004 and was completed in early 2006. This eastern section of the City is characterized by its hillside setting, and residential development within this area is characterized as low-density equestrian homes with hillside views. For 2007, residential development consisted of “in-fill” throughout the City.

Industrial

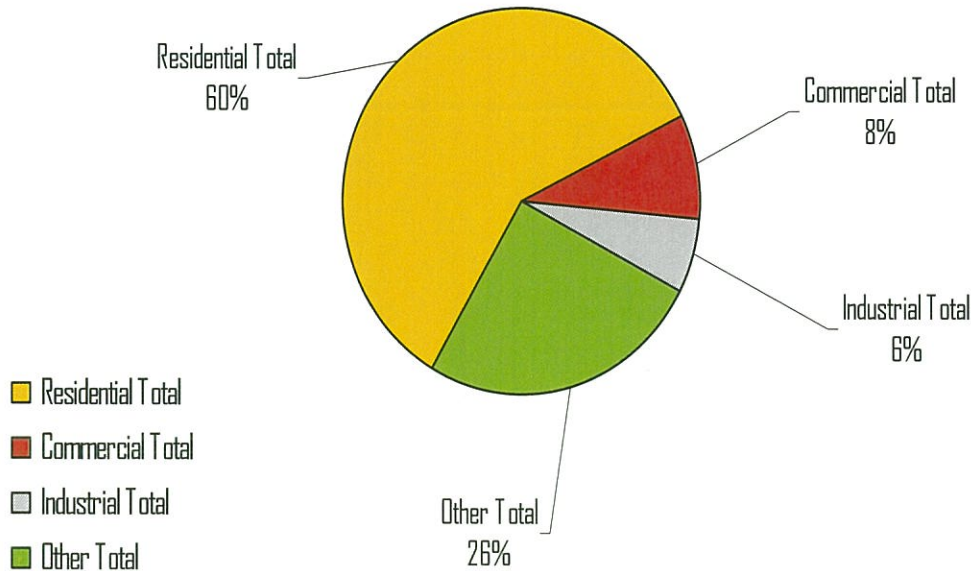
The majority of industrial development in the City is within the Gateway Specific Plan Area—Industrial District, located along Parkridge Avenue, north of Cota Street, and within the M-1 zone near the vicinity of Horseless Carriage Drive and Town and County Drive. Industrial Development in recent years has moved away from large single industrial buildings, towards integrated industrial centers consisting of smaller buildings to accommodate a combination of light industrial uses and/or service-commercial uses.

COMMUNITY TRENDS & GROWTH

RURAL ATMOSPHERE (ZONING LAYOUT OF LAND)

Locations and types of land uses for commercial, residential or industrial are based on the zoning designation. The majority of land in Norco is zoned for residential development. The amount of land zoned for residential uses allows Norco the ability to maintain its rural atmosphere. Please see Table 4 on Page 22 for a complete breakdown of zoning within the City. Also see Chart 1 below, which shows the percentage of land zoned residential as compared to the rest of the zoning in the City.

Chart 1
Zoning Percentages



COMMUNITY TRENDS & GROWTH

Table 4
Zoning Distribution

ZONE/LAND USE DISTRICT	ACREAGE	% OF TOTAL
HS (Hillside)	336	4.1
A-E (Agricultural Estate)	143	1.8
A-1-40 (Agricultural-Low Density)	125	1.5
A-1-20 (Agricultural-Low Density)	3438	42.1
A-1-10 (Agricultural-Low Density)	23	0.3
R-1-10 (Residential-Single Family)	158	1.9
NORCO HILLS SP (Residential-Single Family)	238	2.9
NORCO RIDGE RANCH SP (Residential- Single Family)	874	4.8
Residential Total	5335	59.4
C-0 (Commercial Office)	12	0.1
C-6 (Commercial General)	294	3.6
C-4 (Commercial)	94	1.1
GATEWAY SP (Commercial)	240	1
GATEWAY SP (Office Park)	26	<1
AUTO MALL SP (Commercial)	89	1.1
NORCO HILLS SP (Commercial)	4	<1
Commercial Total	759	8.5
M-1 (Light Manufacturing)	93	1.1
M-2 (Heavy Manufacturing)	355	4.3
GATEWAY SP (Industrial)	112	1.2
AUTO MALL SP (Industrial)	19	<1
Industrial Total	579	6.5
OS (Open Space)	1081	10.8
LD (Limited Development)	459	4.9
Streets and Freeway	754	8.1
NORCO RIDGE RANCH SP (Open Space)	2	<1
NORCO HILLS SP (Open Space)	1	<1
Other Total	2,297	25.6
TOTAL AREA	8,970	100



POPULATION

CENSUS DATA

The 2000 U.S. Census calculated that Norco had a population of 24,157. Since the 1990 census, the City has grown by an estimated 855 persons, an increase of approximately 3.7 percent. It should be noted that the City's population includes the inmates at the California Rehabilitation Center, which increased from 5,201 in 1999 to a population of 5,209 in 2000. Table 5 and Chart 3 below illustrate the City's recent population changes.

Table 5
10-Year Population Increase

	1980 Census	1990 Census	2000 Census
Population	19,732	23,302	24,157
# Increase	5,221	3,570	855
% Increase	36	18	3.7
Dwelling Units	5,383	5,785	6,277
# Increase	1,956	402	492
% Increase	57	7	9
Household Population	18,231	18,593	19,330
# Increase	N/A	362	737
% Increase	N/A	2	4

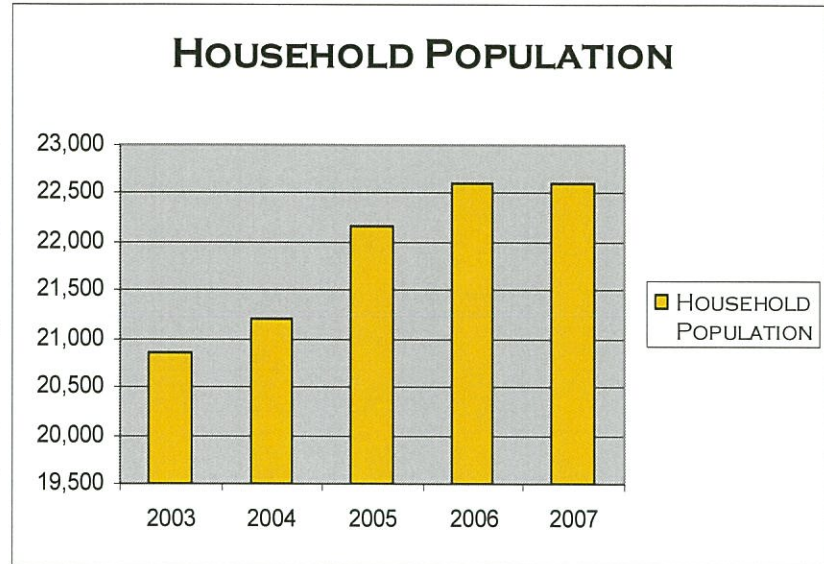


POPULATION

STATE FINANCE DEPARTMENT DATA

The U.S. Census updates its information every 10 years; however, the State Department of Finance records population for each year.

According to the State Department of Finance, population decreased by 336 and the number of household population in 2007 increased by 14, which was a 1% increase.



Below, Table 6 shows more information on the yearly increase.

Table 6
Yearly Population Increase

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
	State Department of Finance				
Population	25,505	25,833	26,813	27,711	27,375
# Increase	5,221	328	980	898	-336
% Increase	1.01	1.29	3.79	3.35	-.98%
Housing Units	4,654	4,626	4,645	4,707	6,806
# Increase	0	-28	19	62	2,099
% Increase	0	-0.60	0.41	1.33	1.44
Household Population	20,851	21,207	22,168	22,595	22,609
# Increase	N/A	356	961	427	14
% Increase	N/A	1.71	4.53	1.93	1



POPULATION

OTHER CENSUS DATA



portion of the Census 2000 data is provided in Table 7. The information in the table indicates the general makeup of the population and other important statistical information. The table also indicates how Norco has changed in the past decade.

Table 7
Comparison Table

	1990 Census Data	2000 Census Data
Transportation		
Average commute time	37 minutes	34 minutes
Commute alone	81%	75%
Commute in a carpool	10%	17%
Rent		
Median rent	\$714	\$867
Rents that exceed \$750/month	42%	55%
Rents that exceed \$1,000/month	21%	36%
Mortgage		
Median mortgage	\$1,140	\$1,494
Mortgages that exceed \$2,000/month	7%	17%
Median home value	\$202,000	\$207,400
Households		
Average household size	3.3 people	3.15 people
Median household annual income	\$51,594	\$62,652
Households that make over \$100,000	8%	22%
Households that make over \$150,000	3%	6%
Households that make less than \$25k	17%	14%
Miscellaneous		
Median Age	32	36
Bachelor's Degree or higher	9%	12%
Foreign Born	--	7%



WORK PROGRAM

WORK PROGRAM 2008

The Planning Department staff has prepared the following work program:

1. Follow through with the finalization and adoption of the Housing Element update after review by the state Department of Housing and Community Development.
2. Analyze potential Development Incentives Policies to assist in the attraction of new business operations that the community desires.
3. Study and recommend zoning modifications to maintain and promote a commercial zone for Sixth Street that reflects the City's small plot agricultural/animal-keeping/equestrian lifestyle and its strong western theme.
4. Prepare zone code amendments as needed to:
 - A) Preserve Animal-Keeping as the primary residential land use
 - B) Encourage development of under-utilized commercial sites
5. Continue with the preparation of issue papers for Planning Commission training.
6. Preparation of an update to the City's Environmental Guidelines.
7. Preparation of the Department's required Annual Report for 2008.
8. Begin addressing the provision of emergency shelters within the zoning code.
9. Begin applying planned development (PD) overlay zones as required by the adopted Housing Element for 2008/2014.

